

News from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services



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CITY OF ROCHESTER AGREES TO PAY \$12,500 FINE FOR BURNING DOWN FOUR BUILDINGS

Concord, NH - The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services Commissioner Tom Burack announced today the execution of an Administrative Fine by Consent with the City of Rochester. The settlement resolves violations of the State's Air Pollution Control Act that occurred on February 21, 2007, when the Rochester Fire Department burned down four buildings owned by the Rochester School District.

Because of the harmful effects of smoke and air emissions from open burning, cities and towns in New Hampshire are authorized to burn only brush and untreated wood at their transfer stations. A fire department is only allowed to burn a structure for the purpose of conducting firefighter training, and it must first notify DES and take proper steps to ensure that hazardous materials are removed. While the Rochester Fire Department did remove hazardous materials prior to burning the buildings, it did not notify DES and acknowledged that the buildings were burned to dispose of them, rather than to conduct firefighter training.

To resolve these violations, the City has agreed to pay a fine of \$3,500 and to have its full-time professional fire department conduct training, valued at \$9,000, for smaller fire departments. The City will explain its violations during these training sessions.

For information on the settlement with Rochester and New Hampshire's open burning regulations, contact Pam Monroe, DES Compliance Bureau Administrator, at 271-0882.

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